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HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF THE

PROTESTANT CHURCHES

AND

MINISTERS OF MONTREAL,

BY

REV. SAMUEL MASSEY.

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ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY W. NOTMAN & SON.

PREFACE BY REV. HENRY WILKES, D.D.

MONTREAL:
WITNESS PRINTING HOUSE, 321 ST. JAMES STREET.
1885.

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PREFACE.

There is an intention to issue certain brief sketches of the Protestant Churches in this city, illustrated by photographs. I have been asked to pen a few lines by way of introduction or preface. This request comes to me rather than to some other one, because my personal knowledge of Montreal extends over 63 years of its history, and also because the 50th year of my residence as one of its Christain ministers is nearly completed.

Let me say, then, that at the first named period, with a population of some 28,000 there were four Protestant Churches in the city—the Anglican, two Presbyterian, and the Methodist; at the last named, arriving from England, I found three additional Presbyterian Churches, being St. Paul's, the American and Erskine, while the Baptist and Congregational Churches had been organized and suitable buildings erected. The steady growth in number, in the size of the congregations, and in their influence, will, I have no doubt, appear in the following sketches, several of which I have seen, and I have all confidence in their accuracy so far as information could be obtained.

The city has been favored during this long period with a succession of clergymen for the most part of very high character, whose piety, learning, enlightened zeal and fidelity would compare favorably with the clerics of any other city. Their nfluence in promoting education, personal and social virtue, the knowledge of God and Truth and Charity, in short, the best interests of the people, has been and continues to be very great. All along the ministers of the several churches have for the most part worked in harmony for the general good. They have maintained good fellowship, though at present large increase in their number necessarily prevents a manifestation so prominent as aforetime.

H. W.

MONTREAL, 11th December, 1885.

SUNDAY MORNING NOTES.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

(PRESBYTERIAN.)

ON A RECENT beautiful Sunday morning, I found myself seated in St. Paul's Church, which stands on the South side of Dorchester Street, near Beaver Hall. It is an imposing edifice of the decorated Gothic style of architecture, with a fine square tower, the only one in the city. The Church will seat about one thousand persons, its interior is chaste and plain, and well adapted for public worship, and the pews are well arranged for comfort and light. There are two marble tablets, one on each side of the pulpit, "Sacred to the Memory" of two of its former pastors, the Rev. Dr. Black and the Rev. Dr. McGill. Around the arch overhead stands this suggestive and beautiful passage of Holy Scripture: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth."

The Church is surrounded with beautiful and well kept lawns and trees, and in Summer time there is a fine variety of choice flowers and shrubs, none of which are too beautiful to adorn the courts of the House of the Lord.

The first building occupied by the Church and Congregation was down town in St. Helen Street. It was opened for public worship in the year 1834. The present Church edifice was erected in 1868, during the pastorate of the Rev. John Jenkins, D.D., who is now "Minister Emeritus."

The Reverend James Barclay, M.A., who preached this morning, is the pastor. He was formerly colleague to the Rev. Dr. McGregor, of St. Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh, who accompanied the late Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, as Chaplain, on his tour through the North-West Provinces, several years ago. Physically, Mr. Barclay is tall and muscular, giving one the idea of strength and power. He belongs to the Charles Kingsley School, and any one pugilistically inclined would think twice before attacking him on the

street, or anywhere else. He is a lover of outdoor pastimes and sports, a champion cricketer and golf player, and may occasionally be seen in the field in unclerical costume, taking an active part in the games. The *Scotsman* speaks of him as being the best all round cricketer North of the Tweed, and a terrifically fast bowler, who has won victory after victory for the West of Scotland. He was Captain of the Glasgow University Cricket and Football Clubs for some years, and also Captain of the "Gentlemen of Scotland." The reverend gentleman is in the bloom and vigor of manhood, of somewhat florid complexion, nose slightly aquiline, wide awake eyes, dark whiskers and beard, with mouth and chin indicating great determination of character. He has a powerful voice and speaks with a strong Scottish accent.

In the matter of outdoor recreations, as in some other matters, he has shown that he has the "courage of his convictions," and I do not think that he has lost anything by it. There is such a thing as being too professional, and too priestly, and there can be little doubt but that this has done its full share in creating the somewhat general prejudice that exists among young men against religion. Mr. Barclay has manifested a special interest in young people—especially young men—and they flock in great numbers to his Church, and regard him, in a special sense, as the Young Man's Friend.

He graduated at the Glasgow University, and took the scholarship prize for the graduates of the year.

Dr. Lees, now of St. Giles, Edinburgh, in speaking of Mr. Barclay, on the occasion of his ordination to St. Michael's, Dumfries, said that during his College career, the Presbytery of Paisley had great cause to be proud of him. He carried off one prize after another,—in fact, his name was seen on every list of honors published by the University.

His mental qualities are on a par with his physical, he is an independent thinker, and reflects the scientific and theological thoughts of the times we live in. His sermons are evidently prepared with much care, and are delivered with great earnestness and force. He preaches in gown and bands, and is a good reader, and an impressive platform speaker. His prayers are solemn, reverential and spiritual, leading you up and away from self, and earth and sin, into the presence of the God and Father of all.

The reverend gentleman has been honored by preaching several times before Her Majesty the Queen, at her special command. He was also a member of the Edinburgh School Board, the members of which are elected by the ratepayers.

He commenced his ministry at St. Paul's in October, 1883, and since that time the Church and Congregation have greatly prospered. The Church now supports a Missionary in Central India. Its annual revenue now amounts to upwards of $22,000. The pastor's salary is $7,300, the largest paid to any minister in the Dominion.

There is an excellent choir and organ, but in the department of congregational singing there is room for improvement.

His Congregation is large and influential, quite filling the Church, and is chiefly composed of Scottish merchants and tradesmen, and their families. Any one entering the Church would see at a glance that the Congregation is one of more than ordinary intelligence, and of somewhat high social status. Its ministers have always been men of commanding intellect and gentlemanly bearing, and who held their several pastorates for a considerable number of years. Their names and good deeds are kindly remembered by our citizens as well as by the Church and Congregation.

The regular communicants number upwards of 500, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered three times a year. As by the Scotch everywhere, it is regarded as a very solemn occasion, the pews are always covered with white cloth, and the elders wait upon the minister and the members in evening dress.

The several organizations of the Church are doing good work in the cause of Christ and humanity, and there is a large and flourishing Sunday School.

The Victoria Mission, Point St. Charles, is supported and carried on by members of this Church.

The sermon, which was eloquent and very instructive, was from the texts, Job xi., 7, "Who can by searching find out God?" and John i., 18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." The sermon was one of a series. Various answers to the question in Job had been already considered—the answer of nature, of history, of the human heart. The various religions which men have built up by "searching" had been already reviewed—pantheism, paganism and

the humanizing religions, and their mingled truth and error pointed out. This is the answer of Revelation: the Incarnate God, for which men had yearned, possessing alike the holiness of God and the dignity of man. The preacher spoke of the credibility and of the beauty of the Revelation, and of its transforming and sustaining power in the heart and life of man; of its fulfilment of the highest aspirations of humanity; and its elevating and purifying of these. He spoke of the love that condescended to our private capacities; of the God brought nigh to us—so nigh that we could comprehend and trust and pour out our confessions of sin and sorrow. Christ alone showed the Father. Creation could not. Nature could not say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The spirit of man with all its light of reason and power of imagination could not. The wise men of God of the Old Testament could not. None but the Son who was with the Father from all eternity. In Christ, God's power, wisdom, holiness, are brought near, we can apprehend them, trust them. In Him the sublimities which only awe the soul are so revealed as no longer to repel and crush, but to attract and raise our sympathies. Christ's prayer has been answered, and through the Word made flesh we know the one true God, and even the sinner can make approach unto God, when in the suffering, sorrowing Son of Man he says, "Come unto Me." It makes worship possible, and prayer a reality, it gives a dignity to man's life here and opens for him the gates of life hereafter.

Elders of the Church:

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W. Ross,
Robert Weir,
Alex. MacPherson,
James Croil,
Alex. Mitchell,
C. D. Proctor,
W. Reid,
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John Larmonth,
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